(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what concrete steps are proposed to be taken by Government in this regard and whether Government propose to bring forward before Parliament a comprehensive broadcasting legislation during the current Budget Session?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Even though the entire population of the country is covered by satellite television and 87.9% is covered by terrestrial television (DD-I), due to limited availability of TV sets with people, only 76% of population in urban areas and 35% of the population in rural areas have actual access to television.

(b) Lack of purchasing power and non-availability of electricity in a large number of rural homes are the primary reasons for low penetration of TV sets.

(c) Television reach and penetration would grow with the over all socio-economic development. However, notwithstanding the low level of television penetration, all efforts are being made to extend the terrestrial coverage of DD to ensure more population and area coverage.

The Government proposes to bring before the Parliament a comprehensive legislation to provide for a regulatory mechanism for all aspects of broadcasting. No time frame can be indicated as of now.

Proposal for FDI in print media

372. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to allow FDI in print media also;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (c) The Government has no proposal to review the Cabinet decision of 1955 with regard to the ban on the entry of foreign media in the news and current affairs category. The Government has several times in the past reviewed this policy and decided not to open this sector for direct investment. With regard to publication of scientific and technical journals, some requests have been made to the Government and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is seeking the views of all related Ministries in this regard. However, no decision to change the 1955 policy has been taken by the Government even in this category.